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Neglected Arabia





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THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

# Neglected

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The Arabian Mission

# Arabia



LAYING THE CORNERSTONE OF THE BUSRAH HOSPITAL, WALI (GOVERNOR) SPEAKING.

NUMBER SEVENTY-THREE

APRIL - JUNE, 1910

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# The Arabian Mission.

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\* Died April 17, 1910.



# NEGLECTED ARABIA.

April - June, 1910.

## Tell It Not.

The following lines were written by Rev. Henry H. Jessup, D.D. the well-known Missionary of the American Presbyterian Board at Beirut, who has so recently died after a missionary service of sixty years among Moslems. Repeating to himself on one occasion when at home the hymn, 'Tell it out among the people that the Saviour reigns,' it occurred to him that there were some things that might as well NOT be told among the Heathen, and he thereupon wrote the following:

Tell it not among the Heathen, that the ship is on a reef;  
It was freighted with Salvation, our "Captain," Lord, and Chief—  
But the tide at length receded, and left it high and dry,  
The tide of gold and silver, the gifts of low and high.  
The eagles and the dollars, the nickels and the dimes,  
Flowed off in other channels, from the hardness of the times.

Tell it not among the Heathen, that the train is off the track;  
The oil all gone—a heated box—the signal come to slack;  
The Foreign Board is sidetracked with its passengers and freight,  
Its messengers of mercy, though so eager, all must wait.  
The oil was once abundant, and the wheels went smoothly on—  
But drop by drop it lessened, and now 'tis wholly gone.

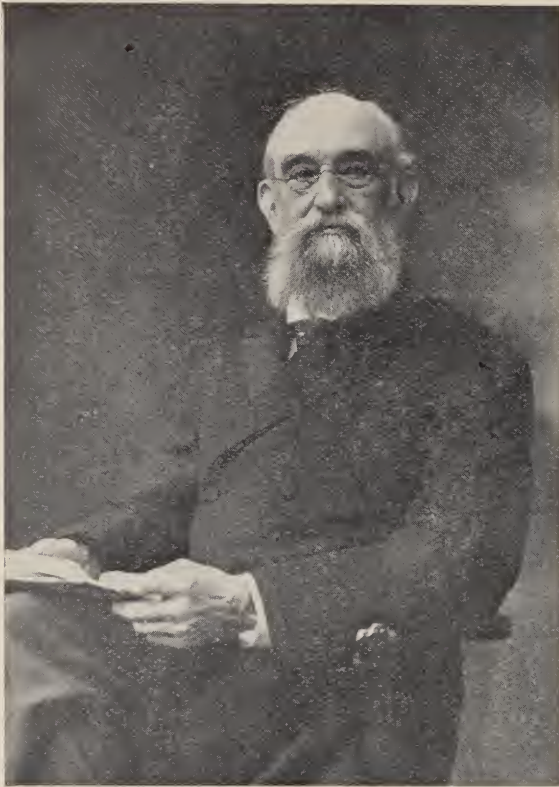
Tell it not among the Heathen, that the stream has ceased to flow,  
Down from the lofty mountains in rain and dew and snow.  
It flowed in floods and rivers, in rivulets and rills,  
It gladdened plains and mountains, the distant lake and hills.  
But now 'tis dry! The thirsty ones, they cannot drink as yet,  
For the Foreign Board is threatened with a paralyzing debt!

Tell it not among the Heathen, tell it not among the Jews!  
Tell it not among the Moslems, this melancholy news;  
Lest sons of Gath deride us, and tell it to our shame  
That Churches sworn to true and full allegiance to His name  
No longer do His bidding, no longer heed the cry  
Of millions, who in sadness, must now be left to die!

Tell it not among the Heathen, but tell it to your Lord.  
Drop on your knees, ye Christians, and speak the truthful word;  
'We *thought* we gave our *all* to Thee, but now with breaking heart,  
We see that in our giving, we had kept back a part.  
So with complete surrender, we give our *all* to Thee.'  
Then tell it to the Heathen, that the Church of Christ is free,  
That the tide of love is rising to float the ship again,  
That the oil of grace is flowing to start the stranded train,  
That the rivulets of mercy are rising to a flood,  
For a blessing to the nations, and the Glory of our God!

## The Rev. Henry Nitchie Cobb, D.D.

### Resolutions of the Trustees of the Arabian Mission.



The Reverend Henry Nitchie Cobb, D.D., Corresponding Secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions and of the Arabian Mission, passed away at his home in East Orange, New Jersey, on Sunday afternoon, April 17, 1910.

The Trustees desire to place on record their profound sense of loss in his going hence—a loss common to the Board and to the Arabian Mission, as well as to the entire Reformed Church.

Dr. Cobb was elected a member of the Board in 1874. He had previously given two years of missionary service in Persia. His membership on the Board revealed him to be a man of such value that upon the retirement of the Rev. John Mason Ferris, D.D., as Corresponding Secretary in 1882, Dr. Cobb was immediately elected his successor. He has given the Board twenty-seven years of distinguished and growingly valuable service. During his administration the work in all the Missions has greatly advanced, the number of missionaries

has trebled, the receipts have increased almost fourfold. It was during his incumbency that the Arabian Mission was organized in 1889, and has grown to be one of our strongest Missions. He twice visited our Missions in Asia in 1892 and 1904, receiving the warmest welcome from the missionaries, greatly endearing himself to the Oriental Christian constituency, and by his valuable counsel greatly strengthening the efficiency of the work in every country which he visited.

Dr. Cobb possessed rare gifts for the work to which he gave the richest and latest years of his life. He was a man of large vision, of keen discernment, of poise and strong business sense, of great Christian convictions, of sustained and kindling enthusiasm. He had a most thorough knowledge of every aspect of the great work of world-evangelization. He was recognized within and without the Church as a great missionary statesman. He gave his whole self to the work in tireless industry, in the utmost promptitude, in the most patient attention to every detail, in his most faithful and highly appreciated correspondence with the Missions and with individual missionaries, in his endeavor by voice and pen to deepen interest in the churches at home in the work abroad, in his correspondence with prospective candidates, in his willing and most helpful identification with every movement which contemplated the enlightenment and enlistment of the constituency at home or the expansion of the work abroad.

We thank God that he gave the Board and the Church and this great cause so many years of his most fruitful life. We cannot but record the privilege and the joy of fellowship with one so strong, so gentle, so lovable, so true, so believing, so Christ-like. We shall long miss his wisdom, his counsel, his inspiration, his presence among us. We shall long cherish his memory and pray for grace to press on in the way of world-winning for Jesus Christ in which he so long led us forward.



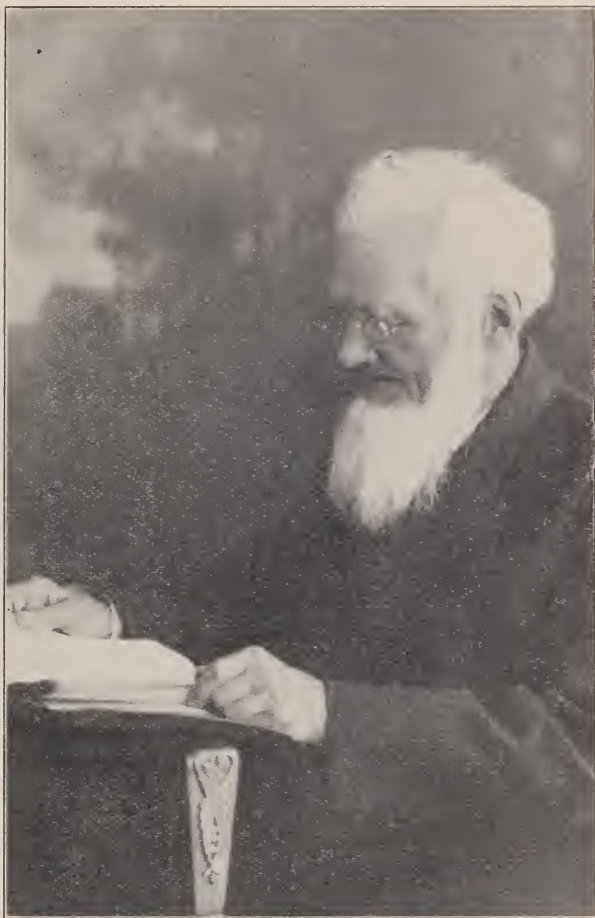
## The Rev. Adrian Zwemer.

At the meeting of the Trustees of the Arabian Mission held on March 23, 1910, it was resolved to place the following Minute, prepared by Dr. Cobb, upon their records:

The Trustees of the Arabian Mission cannot suffer the death of the Rev. Adrian Zwemer, which occurred at his home in Holland, Mich., on March 17, to pass without special notice. For this there are peculiar and abundant reasons. His interest in the Mission antedated its organization, beginning with the first inception of the idea of a mission distinctively to Moslems. When this idea took shape he was one of the founders of the new Mission and his name is affixed with six others to the original Articles of Association. Thus he became one of its incorporators.

To it he cheerfully gave two of his sons, beside giving a daughter to the Amoy Mission. In the long and distinguished career of the elder of these sons he took grateful and lively satisfaction, murmuring not at the early but triumphant close of the other's life and work.

In the development of the Mission and its steady growth he was deeply interested. How much of that growth and development were due to the reality and constancy of his intercession it is not possible to know. It is not too much to believe, however, and to say, that his prayers played an important part in the history and success of the Mission with which he was so long and peculiarly identified, and that their influence will long be felt to its advantage.





BUSRAH\_HOSPITAL. THE GATHERING AT THE LAYING OF THE CORNERSTONE.

## Laying of the Cornerstone of the Busrah Hospital.

The third day of March, 1910, will long be remembered by the missionaries of Busrah, for on that day they were privileged to witness the laying of the cornerstone of the new hospital. An object for which the early missionaries scarcely dared hope, and which in this era of greater freedom had been made possible through the generous gift of a friend and the obtaining of an imperial irade from Constantinople, was about to be realized.

For some days previous the site of the new hospital had been the scene of a great deal of activity. After the location of the walls had been marked out, the workmen dug deep trenches until a solid bottom was found. Upon this the foundation was laid. Now came the masons and the scene became more lively still. Some fifty or sixty people, small and great, worked at the foundation with a will. Some carried brick, others clay, and still others mortar, while the mason laid the stones in place. Under their combined efforts the many trenches were speedily filled, and almost before we were aware of it the time for the laying of the cornerstone had come.

It was decided not to let the laying of the cornerstone pass by unnoticed, but rather to make it an occasion to make our work better known. Invitations in English were sent to all the foreigners in Busrah, while invitations both in Arabic and in Turkish were sent to all the prominent men of Busrah, both civil and religious. Meanwhile the grounds were made in readiness according to the local usage on such occasions. At the northwest corner of the foundation, where the cornerstone was to be laid, a platform for the speakers was erected. A little farther away in an open space a temporary roof, about seventy-five feet long and fifty feet broad, was built. Beneath this benches, rented for the occasion from the neighboring coffee-shops, were placed, and we were ready for the ceremonies.

The day of the laying of the cornerstone was an ideal one, and can best be described by likening it to an ideal June day in America. According to the Turkish custom the hour was set at four o'clock, which corresponds to about ten o'clock in the morning at this time of the year. The missionaries were up betimes to put the finishing touches to the arrangements. Almost the first to arrive was the Turkish band, not hired for the occasion, but by order of the Wali (Governor of the province). For the Wali, when he was asked to take part in the laying of the stone, not only accepted, but immediately declared that he would make that gathering official, since the permission had been obtained from the government; hence all the arrangements as to the program were official and by order of the Wali.



Soon after the band all the people began to arrive, and the river and road presented an animated scene. Numbers arrived by water in bellums, while those who arrived by carriage were quickly ferried across by the waiting boatmen. As the guests came they were ushered to their seat, according to rank, something that is quite carefully observed here. After a few moments' conversation all arose and went to the cornerstone.

On the platform were the Wali, the Commander of the troops, the Commander of the battleships, and Abdel Wahab Pasha. First the Wali made an address in Turkish, in which he signified his pleasure in having part in the laying of the cornerstone of a building that was erected for such a purpose. He expressed his appreciation of the work of the doctors, and also his warm hopes for the success and usefulness of the hospital. Hereupon the official interpreter read a translation of the address, in Arabic. After this the Wali's address was folded up and put in a tin box beneath the cornerstone. In this box were, among other things, an Arabic Bible, a copy of *NEGLECTED ARABIA*, and the Church calendar. The stone was lifted into place, and the Wali struck it thrice with a hammer. Then Dr. Bennett replied to the Wali's address, in Arabic. He thanked the Wali for the kindness, and congratulated the people upon the era of freedom which was doing so much for them; he expressed our deep interest in the future welfare of Busrah, and hoped that the hospital might be the place where many, who were bound by sickness, might find freedom for the body. Abdel Wahab Pasha now spoke in Arabic. He has been quite friendly to the missionaries for a long time, and praised them for their educational and philanthropic work. After this the ceremonies were concluded by Rev. J. E. Moerdyk by a prayer, also in Arabic.

During the ceremonies the people stood around in a circle. And who were in the audience? Conspicuous were the Wali, the Commander of the troops and the Commander of the battleships. There were present besides the acting Nakib, who is one of the most powerful leaders among the Mohammedans, the Mayor of the town, Mullans, teachers, government officials and powerful landowners—present for what purpose? To witness the laying of the cornerstone of a Protestant hospital in Busrah!

True, most likely, the greater number of those present, perhaps by far the greater number, came out of mere curiosity and have no sympathy with our real aim and at heart oppose it. And yet, when we look back twenty years to the time when the missionaries first came here, and were scarcely allowed to remain, while their work was impeded at every step, in every way that Turkish ingenuity could devise, and then look at the present, we are amazed, and must exclaim, What

hath God wrought! Surely the Doctor ten, fifteen years ago, when his work was watched by suspicious soldiers, would hardly have imagined that in a few years Busrah would witness, what perhaps has never before been witnessed in any Turkish province, that the Governor of the province in the presence of the distinguished and influential men of the city, would lay the cornerstone of a New Mission hospital. What an indication of greater opportunity for work! What a challenge to the Church of Christ to redoubled activity!

After the ceremonies were over all again retired to the booth for a short time, where, according to the local custom, coffee was served to the guests. Soon after the Wali left, followed by the other officials. The rest of the guests also soon left, many of them congratulating us and wishing us success with the new hospital.

Busrah's new hospital soon promises to be a reality. Its walls are rapidly rising and in due time its doors will swing open, bidding the sick and diseased enter. God is opening the way. He is giving us instruments wherewith to work. May he also bless the use of these instruments, so that many who come for healing of the body may also discover the disease of their soul, and be led to the great Physician, Jesus Christ.

G. J. PENNINGS.

### Corrected Acknowledgment.

By an oversight the illustration on page 8 of the January-March number of *NEGLECTED ARABIA* of "Everyday Objects in Moslem Home Life" was not properly credited. Acknowledgment was due to the courtesy of *The Christian Herald* for its use.





## A Morning in the Women's Clinic in the Mason Memorial Hospital, Bahrein.



MASON MEMORIAL HOSPITAL.

The Mason Memorial Hospital is a large imposing looking building in the middle of a good sized compound. About 7.30 every morning one can see the people—men, women and children—coming from all directions and hurrying

along so as to be in time for the clinic at eight o'clock, for at that time the gate is shut and then any one wanting to get in must pay a rupee. On the left side of the building is the men's department, and I will not attempt to say anything about it, as my work is among the women. So I turn to the right side where I go in every morning about ten minutes to eight. A little Persian girl assists me and usually gets there early and has things ready to begin work. There are usually ten or fifteen people in the waiting room. A wooden bench runs around two sides of the room and a few sit on it, but most of the women prefer to sit on the floor, as they are not used to chairs in their houses. When I go in I greet them in Moslem style, "Salaam Alaekum," which means "Peace be upon you," and they reply "Alaekum salaam," "Upon you be peace." Each new patient is given a prescription when she sees the doctor, and each prescription is given a number which must be recorded, so the first thing I do is to collect the numbers and write them down in the case book. By that time it is eight o'clock and time to begin. More women have come and the room is quite full. Mrs. Dykstra and I take turns in giving the Gospel talk morning after morning. We find that it is better to read a verse or two and give a talk of five or ten minutes than to make it longer, as the babies and small children are very restless, especially if they are ill. The women all listen attentively to the Gospel message and I am sure many of them feel that it is like medicine for their hearts. The darkness is very dense, and we would often feel utterly discouraged if we came to these poor dark souls with anything but our Gospel, which tells of Jesus Christ, who came to give light to those who sit in darkness. After closing our service with a prayer I begin treating the chronic cases. There are always a certain number with bad eyes or ears or who have ulcers to be dressed. There is a pretty little girl of about ten coming to the hospital every day who has very little sight left, and we can do very little for her eyes. It makes one

feel very sad to realize that this little girl must go through life blind just because her eyes have been neglected. I do not mean neglected medically, but they have never been kept clean. Then next comes a woman bringing a baby with smallpox. The poor little thing is over the worst of it, but it has several bad sores to be cleaned and dressed and its eyes are in a bad condition. The people here think that the sooner a child has smallpox the better, for it must have it some time. Just as at home some people give a sigh of relief when their children have finished with whooping cough or the measles. When we are about half through the doctor comes in to see those cases which must be watched from day to day, and also all the new cases. When I tell a woman to come into the office to see the doctor she spends about a minute arranging her head gear, so that her face will be entirely covered up, for among the Arab women and high class Persians only their husbands or the men of their own family are allowed to see their faces. I try to find out beforehand what the woman complains of so as to tell the doctor, for you can imagine how trying it is to have a black bundle sitting on a chair in front of you and be expected to cure her without seeing her face. If the trouble is with a tooth or with her eyes, after much coaxing she will make a small hole in the black veil she wears over her face.

The low class Persian women are not so particular about covering their faces, so do not waste so much of the doctor's time and patience. And so the morning goes, but I must tell you about one more patient before I close. She was sitting on the veranda waiting for me last Sunday morning when I came down to breakfast. She was a poor Persian woman and an old acquaintance of mine. While she was asleep in her date hut the night before rats came and gnawed her hands and feet. My table boy translated from Persian into Arabic for me, and this is what he said: "Last night the rats came and ate her hands and feet, and she was asleep and had no information of it."

BESSIE A. MYLREA.



## A New Beginning at Kuwait.

Our annual meeting here in Arabia comes to us as a stimulus to better work and larger vision, for we not only get the personal touch one with another which is so valuable, but we also learn from each other the great possibilities all over our field and so unite our energies in striving for the common cause of Christ in Arabia.

This year the annual meeting was held in Bahrein, where we were cordially entertained, and the spirit of good fellowship prevailed through all the meetings. Especially glad were we to see Dr. and Mrs. Cantine back among us after their long absence, and to see them looking so well.

To me each station report seemed to be pregnant with opportunities, and we from Busrah felt that our work too was taking big strides, inasmuch as real liberty seemed to be gaining ground in Turkey, and our long desired irade for the hospital had at last been procured. But greater than these and more important to us, was the invitation which the Sheik of Kuwait had given that we might come there and open work. The story of how this came about is a long one, but it is enough to say that I met him one day at Sheik Khazal's and there he gave us the invitation.

Mr. Van Ess and I were therefore appointed by the Mission to go to Kuwait and interview Sheik Molamak. We had the good fortune to get a Persian steamboat for this port, and after journeying about the Gulf for four days we landed at Kuwait.

As it happened the Sheik himself was not at home, but we were cordially received by his eldest son Gabbar, who gave us a room in the Sheik's guest house, and we began at once to make friends with him as well as with many of the influential men of Kuwait. Some of these men we had met previously at Busrah, and we were the guests of one of these men at dinner. It was a dinner typically Arab in style, and we enjoyed it, although we were obliged to eat with our fingers, which might have been hard work for a beginner, but we were accustomed to this kind of knife and fork, so we could enjoy the conversation and unconsciously get rid of a large share of rice and mutton. However, the food is really delicious and is always well cooked, so one can enjoy one's self and have no scruples.

We had been two days at Kuwait when the Sheik returned, and although Gabbar had treated us well, his father left nothing to be desired and ordered that we should occupy one of the finest and best furnished rooms of his palace. Here we found plush curtains draped over the windows and doors, a Brussels carpet on the floor, upholstered chairs, decorated ceilings, and servants at every turn to do our

bidding. We were told that a carriage or horses awaited us whenever we wished to use them, but we much preferred to walk about the place, and so did not need to accept all his kind offers.

Every morning we visited the Sheik in his reception room, and it was a most interesting study to watch the different types of Arabs coming in to salaam their Sheik. After they had kissed his hand or shoulder, according to their rank, they stepped back and took a seat among the others, some of them in an honored place near the Sheik, and others farther away. If a man whom the Sheik wished to honor sat too far away he was at once told to draw nearer, and others nearer the Sheik had to give place to him.

As we came into his presence we passed the ordinary salutations and took our places. Then we were supposed to remain quiet, according to Arab custom, until the Sheik opened the conversation with us. This he would rarely do until he had called for coffee and we had finished with it. One soon becomes accustomed to the dignified mien of an Arab mejulus (as a sitting like this is called), and comes to realize that anything frivolous is not acceptable, as it is not good form among the Arabs to laugh or even to smile at such a place.

There was a young Abyssinian appointed by the Sheik to go out with us on our walks about the city, and we learned from him that he was one of the fifty odd slaves of the Sheik. Besides these slaves there are a great many servants and retainers, so that each day the Sheik feeds several hundred men and women of his own household. Whenever the Sheik called for anything he would shout out and these black fellows would echo and re-echo his order at the door, in the hallways, and downstairs, until the furthest one, who perhaps has that order to carry out, would at once be ready to do his bidding. It is easier than a telephone to have servants like this, but I think a little more expensive. It may not be many years, however, before such a thing may be introduced, since the Sheik already possesses a fine steam yacht and an automobile. On the whole the slaves seem to be happy, and from what I heard and could see were very well treated.

The people of Kuweit are more friendly and polite than any I have met in other places of the Gulf. On the Pirate Coast the people, especially the women and children, follow after a white man and are rather impudent in their curiosity. No such lack of propriety was to be seen here at Kuweit, and I suppose we can look for the reason in the fine and capable man who is their ruler. Not only are the people well behaved, but the town is kept the cleanest of any in the Gulf, and the houses built on a rising slope of sandy gravel are naturally drained, and one is not surprised to learn that here there is no malaria and other diseases are scarce as well.



The town is built on the only good harbor in the Persian Gulf, and extends from southeast to northwest about two miles along the water front. From the sea the buildings extend backward in two wings for over half a mile on each side. In the center the town is not as wide because the desert extends into it and forms a market place for the Arabs. Here is where the great mass of people congregate during the day. It is the hub of the town, and from here the bazar extends down several streets leading down to the water front, while on the other side scores of Bedouin tents are pitched indiscriminately out into the desert.

Coming here in the morning we found several thousand Arabs bartering their wares in the market place. Some had brought camel loads of desert greens for sale, which seemed to be mostly docks and



A BEDOUIN TENT.

dandelions, others had large bundles of dried brushwood, while some of the Bedouins sold sour milk or wild desert vegetables. These latter, called chimah or fuggali, are rather tasty and have much the appearance of potatoes. Here and there was a flock of black goats and sheep, and in another place fresh sea fish had been brought in to tempt the greedy Bedouin. Daily we walked along this most interesting bazaar and were never tired looking at the great sea of passing faces, always seeing in vision the time when these people would hear the gospel of our Lord. One never tires of watching and listening to the bartering of these hardy sons of the desert, especially when one understands their language. Hard, thin and sunburnt, dried, as it were, to resist the heat and toughened to withstand the fatigue which attends their long desert journeys, they represent a truly virile race. They are keen and sharp at a bargain, but simple and uncontrollable in



their desires as children. Again an Arab would haggle all day to save a few coppers, but would probably slaughter his last sheep for you if you came to his camp on a journey.

At times we would watch a caravan wending its way out of the city, and how we longed to be among the riders, as they turned their faces toward the west and began their journey into that vast unknown country. If God wills it will not be long before some of us too will be mounted on camels trekking our way into the secrets of unknown Arabia and planting the Gospel where it has a right to be.

We did not remain long at Kuwait; a week sufficed to arrange with the Sheik what was satisfactory to all of us, and we hope that in a short time we will have good reports to give about this place. The Sheik expressed pleasure in looking forward to our coming to Kuwait, and I hope that the future will not disappoint him or us.

On the day appointed for our homeward journey the Sheik came to our room to bid us farewell, and about noon we set out for Jahara, five hours' ride away. We reached this place about sundown and found that it consisted of about a hundred mud houses built close together, and the whole surrounded by green fields of wheat and alfalfa. We had expected that our first night on the desert would be rather disagreeable, but fortunately we met an old friend of ours and we were invited to his house for a supper of roast lamb and rice (*à l'arab*). Later we betook ourselves to the inn and found that it was a low-roofed house with mud floor and walls, no window and only one door. Camels and horses were tethered just outside, but Mr. Van Ess and I were too weary to complain, so rolled up in our blankets and were soon off to sleep. We were roughly awakened at 1.30 A. M., and, as it was full moon, we were off at once for a long march. Five weary hours were passed on horseback, and when it became light we walked for a good two hours to give our horses rest and to stretch our legs a bit. During the day we halted for only two and a half hours, and it was nearing nightfall again when we saw date trees in the distance, which our guide told us was Sofwan, our next halting place. We arrived about two hours after sunset and were warmly welcomed by the Turkish soldiers who are stationed on guard here. A bit of tea refreshed us, and after supper with the soldiers we were off to bed, only to be routed out again at four o'clock. Five hours' hard riding brought us to Zobeir, where we were able to hire a carriage. In an hour and a half the remaining eight miles between Zobeir and Busrah were left behind and before we realized it we were walking down the streets of Busrah to the Mission House, our journey and undertaking successfully accomplished.

ARTHUR K. BENNETT.





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